

Message Text

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45

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 DLOS-07 EB-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20 OMB-01 DRC-01 /150 W

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R 241207Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7402

INFO AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 5436

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AR, MX

SUBJ: VISIT OF MEXICAN PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA

1. SUMMARY: MEXICAN PRESIDENT EXHEVERRIA DEPARTED ARGENTINA ON JULY 21 AFTER A FIVE DAY OFFICIAL VISIT. PRESS COVERAGE THROUGHOUT HIS STAY WAS EXTENSIVE AND FAVORABLE. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE SIGNED ON JULY 19 CONTAINED LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF EARLIER STOPS ON THE TOUR. AT LEAST ON THE SURFACE, GOA TREATMENT AT ALL TIMES APPEARED CORDIAL. THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT SOME ARGENTINE OFFICIALS WERE LESS THAN ENCHANTED BY EXHEVERRIA'S PERFORMANCE. ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF TRIP WILL BE COVERED IN SEPTTEL. END SUMMARY.

2. MEXICAN PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA LEFT ARGENTINA ON JULY 21 AFTER A FIVE DAY OFFICIAL VISIT. MRS. PERON AND MOST OF THE CABINET SAW HIM OFF AT THE AIRPORT AS HE DEPARTED FOR BRAZIL.

3. PRESS COVERAGE WAS EXTENSIVE AND FAVORABLE. THE ONLY GAFF REPORTED WAS THAT ECHEVERRIA FORGOT TO SAY GOODBY TO FONMIN VIGNES AND RETURNED AFTER TAKING SEVERAL STEPS TOWARD THE

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AIRPLANE TO GIVE VIGNES AN "ABRAZO". THE LOCAL ENGLISH

PAPER ALSO QUOTED ECHEVERRIA AS SAYING MRS. PERON "IS BECOMING A STATESWOMAN IN THIS GREAT COUNTRY". THIS INFERENCE THAT MRS. PERON IS ENGAGED IN ON-THE-JOB TRAINING WAS NOT CARRIED BY THE SPANISH-LANGUAGE PAPERS AND ONE AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT WHO HEARD THE REMARK TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE DID NOT INTERPRET IT AS INTENDED IN A DEROGATORY SENSE.

4. IN ADDITION TO THE NUMEROUS GOA DIGNITARIES, ECHEVERRIA ALSO MET WITH A WIDE RANGE OF ARGENTINE POLITICAL FIGURES. HE ALSO HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH HE FIELDDED QUESTIONS IN AN IMPRESSIVE MANNER. HIS SPEECH BEFORE THE CONGRESS, WAS OVERLY LONG AND PEDAGOGIC. AT TIMES HE APPEARED TO BE LECTURING HIS ARGENTINE HOSTS ON HOW TO SAFEGUARD DEMOCRACY AND COMBAT THEIR TERRORIST PROBLEM. TWO CABINET MINISTERS WERE OBSERVED MAKING UNCOMPLIMENTARY HAND SIGNS DURING THE SPEECH.

5. THE JOINT DECLARATION SIGNED ON JULY 29 CONTAINED LITTLE NEW AND APPERAS TO TOUCH ON MANY OF THE SAME POINTS AS THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE FROM EARLIER STOPS. THE NEED TO RESTRUCTURE THE OAS, THE DESIRE TO SEE CUBA PARTICIPATE IN LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS AND IN THE MFM, THE PROPOSAL TO SET UP AN ORGANIZATION FOR LA CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION AND PROTECTION FOR RAW MATERIAL PRICES WERE ALL MENTIONED. HOMAGE WAS ALSO PAID TO THE MEMORY OF PERON AND SUPPORT WAS GIVENFOR ARGENTINA'S POSITION ON LOS.

6. COMMENT: WHILE THERE WERE NO TANGIBLE RESULTS OF ANY GREAT MAGNITUDE ACHIEVED BY THE TRIP, IT WAS PROBABLY OF SOME SMALL HELP TO MRS. PERON. SHE CARRIED OFF HER NEW ROLE AS CHIEF OF STATE WELL, WHICH WILL ADD TO HER IMAGE AMONG ARGENTINES. ECHEVERRIA WHILE ALWAYS WARMLY AND CORDIALLY RECEIVED DID NOT SEEM TO MAKE THAT GREAT AN IMPRESSION FOR ONE WHO APPEARS TO HAVE HOPES OF PLAYING S SIGNIFICANT LEADERSHIP ROLE IN LA. FOR HIS TRIP TO HAVE MUCH IMPACT IN THE LONG RUN SOME TYPE OF FOLLOW UP ON THE TOPICS HE DISCUSSED WITH THE GOA AND OTHER GOVERNMENTS ON THIS TOUR WILL BE NECESSARY. AS THE DEPARTMENT KNOWS, I HAVE KNOWN ECHEVERRIA SINCE HE WAS SUB-MINISTER OF GOBERNACION. WHEN HE GREETED ME IT WAS CORDIAL, BUT CORRECT. IT WAS QUITE A CONTRAST WITH HIS ENTHUSIASTIC GREETING TO THE CHINESE AND SOVIET AMBASSADORS. RABASA, CONFIDENTIAL

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WHO I HAVE ALSO KNOWN, SEEMED SUBDUED EXCEPT WHEN TALKING ABOUT HIS PARENTS.

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